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## EDITORIAL.

THE BOTANICAL MEETINGS in Buffalo in connection with the American Association were remarkably successful. American botanists were present in large numbers, and the attendance was well sustained throughout the almost continuous sessions of six days. During two days preceding the meeting of the Association the Botanical Society was represented by eleven of its twenty-three members, and the papers presented were of a type that justified the existence of the organization. With the opening of the Association, however, it became evident that the Section of Botany and the Botanical Club were to have the most largely attended sessions of their existence. In Section G more than forty papers were upon the programme. These papers, moreover, were notably strong, representing well the great increase of botanical activity in this country. The most notable feature of the meeting was the presence of a large representation of our younger botanists, who have been trained in the newer methods, and whose crisp and clear presentations of important work augured well for the future of American botany. The Botanical Club, also, was full of papers which would rank better than most of the papers in the Section a few years ago. To one in familiar contact with American botany for a number of years there could be no better evidence of wonderful development than the Buffalo meeting. It seems to the GAZETTE a serious mistake on the part of the botanist as an individual, and as the representative of an institution which seeks botanical students and influence, to neglect such meetings. Such neglect must reflect upon the individual and the institution and weaken any hold upon a botanical constituency. We would especially commend such meetings to the younger race of botanists. The older botanists, who have cultivated a habit of neglect, doubtless will continue to do so, but it is at the expense of declining to be of great service in personally stimulating the progress of botanical science.

THE MATTER of the director of the scientific work in the Department of Agriculture came before the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Buffalo meeting. The Scientific Chief of the Department of Agriculture proposed to create such an office and it received the warm endorsement of the Association, as it has of almost every body of men to which it has been presented.

It is worthy of note that the action was vigorously advocated by the only chief of division in the department who was present at Buffalo, indicating that other divisions, if not the botanical ones, favor the plan.

The open letter opposing the creation of this office is its own best answer. The writer acknowledges that the botanical divisions have, like Topsy, "jes' growed." Unfortunately the conditions did not—perhaps could not—conduce to symmetrical development and the gardener's hand is needed to prevent lopsided, ragged, and unsightly forms. This does not mean that the vigorous plant is to be clipped into a geometrical figure, but that it is to be brought to the highest degree of natural symmetry.

When it is so that one division cannot have opportunity to grow the plants it needs, though other divisions have abundant greenhouse facilities, it is quite evident that someone, with the same functions as a college president, is required to coordinate—not to subordinate—the divisional work. How proper coordination could interfere with, instead of promoting, research and "practical" work, is difficult for us to understand.